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RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 7047
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RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 3395
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH 7858
RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 1964
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5290
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DEPARTMENT FOR PA, NEA/ARN, INR/IC/CD, INR/R/MR:STHIBEAULT AND
JMCCARTER, VOA NEWS CA, NEA/PPD:CBOURGEOIS, AZAIBACK, AND
AFERNANDEZ, IIP/G/NEA-SA MDAVIDSON
WHITE HOUSE FOR NSC
CENTCOM FOR CCPA

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: Syria/Israel, Syria/Argentina, Lebanon, Iraq, Palestinian
Territories (8/16)

¶1. Summary: Syrian papers on August 16 featured a statement by Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak saying on August 15 that "Israel is not interested in war with Syria, and Israel believes that Syria does not want war either," adding that "war shouldn't erupt, therefore." Barak made the statement while visiting the Golan Height.

Papers also reported that a session of political consultations was held on August 15 between Deputy Foreign Minister, Faisal Miqdad and his Argentinean counterpart, Roberto Garcia Moritan, within the framework of the signed cooperation between the two countries. During the meeting, the two sides reviewed bilateral relations and means to develop them. The two sides exchanged opinions on the current developments in the Middle East, particularly those connected with stalemated peace process in the Middle East.

As for developments in Iraq, papers reported that Iraq witnessed on August 14 the worst bloody attacks since 2003 when four booby-trapped trucks exploded in the Iraqi northern governorate of Ninawa, killing more than 200 and injuring hundreds of Iraqis. Papers cited a statement by the Arab League on August 15 condemning the bloody explosions. "The best way to end violence in Iraq is to go ahead steadily in the process of national concordance and reconciliation among Iraqis," the AL statement said.

End of summary.

¶2. Selected Headlines:

"Subsequent to a visit to occupied Golan, Barak: Neither Israel, nor Syria want war" (Independent al-Watan, 8/16)

"Information Minister Bilal and Deputy Foreign Minister Miqdad discuss bilateral relations and Arab-Latin American cooperation with a delegation from the Argentinean Foreign Ministry" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 8/16)

"Terrorism strikes in Mosul: 400 Iraqis killed and injured in four suicide bombings. President Bush hopeless: I don't have enough time" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th, 8/16)

"Lebanese opposition: Targeting the army serves Western parties"
(Government-owned Al-Thawra, 8/16)

"Nicholas Burns in Israel to sign an agreement on 30 billion
US\$-worth of US military aid. Juliani: Establishing a Palestinian
statehood is not in the US interest" (Government-owned Al-Ba'th,
8/16)

13. Editorial Block Quotes:

"Victory and Making of Defeat"

Isam Dari, Chief Editor of government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/16):
"On the first anniversary of the great victory that the heroes of
the resistance in Lebanon achieved, Arabs and the oppressed on earth
have the right to raise their heads high and boast that a small
group defeated a formidable arrogant force in something like a
miracle...."

"The result of the Lebanon war last year was a miserable defeat for
the United States, which waged the aggression through Israel, its
exclusive agent in the region...."

"A year ago, the feet of the stalwart resistance buried the 'new'
Middle East of Bush, Rice, Cheney, and Olmert in the mud of the
south and gave birth to a resisting new Middle East, proving that
this Arab land and this Arab people are the new form of the new Arab
East...."

"Arabs and Muslims and all those who yearn for freedom, dignity, and
sovereignty celebrate the first anniversary of the victory while

they are more determined to stick to the resistance option, which,
as the experiences of May 2000 and July-August 2006 prove, is the
more correct and most effective option for those who seek
freedom...."

"Is it not strange that some Arabs and Lebanese turned the victory
into defeat while the Israelis themselves, on the highest level,
admitted and are still admitting defeat?"

"Those Arabs wanted the resistance approach to be defeated, not only
in Lebanon but also in the whole region. That is why they were
saddened by the defeat of Israel and the fall of the new Middle
East...."

"We believe that the Arab people, a year after the victory, know now
who defends right, justice, and freedom and who stands against Arab
interests and works to distort the victory and turn it into defeat.
But none of the world laboratories and none of the international
conspiracies will be able to turn a victory into a defeat or a
setback. The defeat makers will receive nothing but defeat and
humiliation."

"The Convoy Proceeds"

Khalid al-Ashhab, an editorialist in government-owned Al-Thawra,
wrote (8/16): "There were some pitiful Lebanese hirelings and
discordant voices that tried to belittle or turn against the victory
that the Lebanese resistance achieved one year ago...."

"They were always small, offered for sale and hire. But today they
are smaller, too small for anyone to turn attention to them or for
the memory to bring them back even for a moment. The situation of
those who hired them is no better. Both, the hired and the
recruiter, are trying hard to evade and move out of the way of the
broom that is everyday sweeping them an inch or a meter toward the
garbage dump...."

"UN Security Council Resolution 1770 Confirms Failure"

Muhriz al-Ali, a commentator in government-owned Al-Thawra, wrote

(8/16): "Security Council Resolution 1770, which expands the role of the United Nations in Iraq, proves that US plans to bring back security and stability to this country have failed, and that the security approach alone is not enough to bring Iraq out of the state of chaos that turned it into a quagmire of death and destruction....

"The United States is in a state of confusion and blunder as a result of its crisis in Iraq.... President Bush's talk about progress in Iraq is meant to mislead the American and international public....

"The problem in Iraq is not only a security problem, but also a political problem resulting from occupation....

"The United Nations must remove the causes of the problem and help Iraqis achieve national accord to save Iraq and maintain the unity of the Iraqi people and territory.... Otherwise, the role of the United Nations will complement the role of the occupation forces...."

"A Daily Scene of Injustice"

Omar Jaftali, an editorialist in government-owned Tishreen, wrote (8/16): "Despite the increasing talk about peace and the Palestinian-Israeli meetings and contacts, nothing has changed on the Palestinian ground.... Israeli incursions, arrests, killings, destruction, and frenzied Judaization operations, especially in Jerusalem continue....

"What Israel is doing in the Palestinian territories will remain a blot of shame in the record of the United States, which supports injustice and aggression....

"It is regrettable that despite all this, some people still believe that the Bush administration will work for peace and that its call for a peace conference in the fall is a source of hope."

Corbin